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Tac-Tix

– A game created by Danish mathematician and writer Piet Hein

Number of Players: 2

Object: To force your opponent to pick up the last object of sixteen.

Materials: 16 objects

Playing the Game:

1. Arrange the objects in four columns of four rows.

2. For game 1, decide which player will go first. After the first game, the loser of the previous game should go first in the next game.

3. The first player picks up one or more objects from one row or one column of the array. If the player wishes to take more than one object in that turn, he or she can only take objects that were adjacent to each other in the original array.

4. The second player then takes one object or multiple ADJACENT objects from any one row or column.

5. Players continue alternating turns.

Remember, two or more objects cannot be taken on a single turn if they are separated by a gap left by a previous move.

6. The player left to pick up the last object loses.

Gyles Brandreth, World’s Best Indoor Games, New York, Pantheon Books, 1981.

Reprinted in:

Fleisher, Paul. Brain Food, Games That Make Kids Think. Tucson, AZ: Zephyr

Press. 1997.